

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

The Williamsburg Economic Development Authority held its regular meeting on April 9, 2009 in the 3rd Floor Conference Room of the City of Williamsburg Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street, Williamsburg, Virginia.

The following Directors were present:

PRESENT: T. Montgomery Mason, Chairman, Edward Richardson, Joseph W. Brinkley, William H. Carr and Thomas W. Gillman.

Also present were Michele Mixner DeWitt, City of Williamsburg Economic Development Director and Christina Workman Shelton, Deputy City Attorney.

ABSENT: Marian Jelinek and Mario Kokolis

I. Call to Order

Chairman T. Montgomery Mason, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Deputy City Attorney Christina Shelton serving as secretary Pro-Tem called the role and determined that a quorum of the Directors' was in attendance.

II. Approval of Minutes from March 10, 2009 Meeting

Mr. Brinkley moved the approval of the minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting with three amendments: Change Paul "Volker" to "Volke"; remove the phrase "at any rate" from the first paragraph of the third page; remove "lowest responsible bidder" from the last paragraph on page 3. Mr. Carr seconded the motion to approve the minutes as amended. The minutes were approved by the following vote:

T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye

III. Review of EDA March 2009 Financial Statement (Exhibit A)

The Directors reviewed the Authority's Financial Statement for the month of March, 2009. Ms. Mixner DeWitt explained that there had been an accrual error made. The financial statement shows a payment of \$2,500 to the College of William & Mary Technology and Business center had not yet been made, and nevertheless is shown on the financial statement as an expenditure. This payment will be made shortly. There is also a \$2,000 sign grant award for April which also appears in the financial statement.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. Presentation of Proposed Resolution in Support of Airport

Walter Cooper from the Pilot's Association appeared before the EDA supporting the proposed Resolution before the EDA supporting a general aviation airport in the Williamsburg – James City County area. Mr. Cooper stated that the information in the Resolution comes from a study conducted in 2007 which examined costs and benefit of a general aviation airport in James City County, and the feasibility of maintaining the existing general aviation airport, or in the alternative, to construct a general aviation airport in another part of the County, or in the alternative, have no governmental involvement in either maintaining the existing airport or constructing a new airport.

Mr. Cooper stated that the Airport Commission has been concerned by the lack of feedback regarding the airport from the local business community. The airport provides many services to the community other than recreational opportunities, and the Pilot's Association would like to see a general aviation airport remain open in James City County. Mr. Cooper also stated that the recent report on the issue notes that Williamsburg – James City County airport ranks first or third in the Commonwealth among general aviation airports, depending on what categories of services and facilities are examined, which indicates that the existing airport is a well regarded facility.

Mr. Cooper also stated that he would take the signed resolution to the Airport Committee as a sign of support from the Williamsburg EDA. As report appears to recommend relocation of the airport, and new facilities, Mr. Cooper noted that placement of any new facility is the difficulty with construction of a new airport.

Mr. Carr suggested adding a date to the third paragraph of the Resolution to clarify that the data is from 2007.

Mr. Brinkley moved approval of the resolution with Mr. Carr's suggested amendment. Mr. Gillman seconded. The Resolution with amendment was adopted by the following vote:

T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye

B. Report by Ed Richardson regarding his Contact with Jane Medlin Burton of the Occasion for the Arts

Mr. Richardson reported back to the EDA regarding his visit with Jane Burton with Occasion for the Arts. He asked her what the EDA could do to assist the Occasion.

Her suggestions included assisting with fees and costs associated with police and paid parking. They discussed the EDA acting as a liaison with the City. She noted that participating artists are unhappy with the Prince George Street site, and that on Prince George Street, only the culinary events were successful last year. Ms. Burton started that the Occasion would like to have a benefit in spring to raise money for the event. They would also like to include craftsmen from Colonial Williamsburg in the event. She also informed Mr. Richardson that this year's Occasion is planned for Saturday and Sunday, expanding to a two day event.

Mr. Carr suggested that the City may want to consider waiving fees for the event as a demonstration of economic support. The EDA also discussed how the Occasion needs to be able to demonstrate additional streams of revenue the Occasion brings into the City by tracking sales and demonstrating that the event does bring in additional tax revenues. The EDA members discussed revenues the event may generate for local businesses. As this appears to be very difficult to track, Mr. Carr suggested approaching the business school for assistance with developing a process for measuring the value of the Occasion for local businesses.

Mr. Richardson noted that this year the Occasion is the same weekend as Parents' Weekend at the College of William & Mary. While this is not always the case, because of the overlap this year, Mr. Mason felt that the Occasion should take advantage by marketing the weekend the college alumni.

Mr. Carr agreed to approach the Business school for help with processing revenue information. Ms. Dewitt suggested that Marian Jelinek may be able to provide some assistance on this issue as well. It was also suggested that the College could provide some additional venues for the event.

Mr. Richardson suggested that the Occasion needs to develop corporate donors and revise donor lists, and that the Occasion could benefit from additional organizational assistance from the EDA. It was also suggested that some or all of the Commissioners could meet with the Hotel-Motel Association and suggest the development of packages and other ways local businesses could promote their business through the event to market the weekend as a destination weekend.

Ms. DeWitt will coordinate with the Farmer's Market as the Occasion this year will overlap the Farmer's Market event on Duke of Gloucester Street on the Saturday morning.

Mr. Brinkley noted that the Occasion has always been a local weekend, and that any change in the focus of the event will take time, require a different view of the event than previously envisioned, and will take multiple years to accomplish.

V. New Business

A. Ratification of Sign Grant for Day's Inn, 902 Richmond Road

Subcommittee approved the sign grant. EDA needs to ratify subcommittee approval for grant of \$2,000.00. Planning Commission has approved the sign.

Mr. Carr moved to ratify the approval of the subcommittee. Mr. Richardson seconded. The Motion passed as follows:

T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye

B. E-Commerce Grant Application from Retro's Restaurant

Retro's Good Eats Restaurant located at 435 Prince George Street applied for an e-commerce grant from the EDA to redesign their existing website. Retro's hired Vectec to complete the project. The grant is for \$1,750.00, and represents one-half of the cost of redesigning the website.

Mr. Montgomery noted that fliers have gone out to local business about the grant program and the importance of increasing visibility for local businesses on the web, which is particularly important as younger consumers tend to use the internet as their source for information, rather than the phone book. He also noted that the James City County EDA is looking into a similar program.

Mr. Gillman moved approval of the e-commerce grant to Retro's Good Eats. Mr. Richardson seconded the motion. The grant was approved by the following vote:

T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye

C. Consideration of the Amended Demolition Loan Program

The changes made to the demolition program discussed in March were previously approved, and were provided this month to the EDA for informational purposes.

The question was raised whether or not the amount of grant dollars available for a single applicant should be further limited. The question was also raised about whether or not the EDA should require applicants to obtain three bids or estimates from three different contractors as part of the application process.

Mr. Gillman thought it would be inadvisable to limit the amount of the grant any further, but would like to see multiple bids or estimates as part of the application in future. The Directors' suggested further conversation at the May meeting would be beneficial. No action was taken on this matter, and this matter is to be placed on the May agenda.

D. Ferry Service Resolution

Mr. Mason began by stating that this is a cost issue. It appears that VDOT is close to a decision on reducing ferry service, and notes that in future, it may be beneficial to become involved in these types of discussions at an earlier date.

Mr. Richardson moved adoption of the resolution. Mr. Brinkley seconded the Motion. The resolution was adopted by the following vote:

T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye

Mr. Carr left the meeting after suggesting a new category be shown on sign grant informational table showing the year grant made.

VI. Economic Development Director Reports

Sign Grant Funding

The EDA had accumulated revenue from bonds dating prior to 2005, which had been used to fund these grants. Last year the City contributed \$10,000 to the Economic Development Contingency Fund. There is currently \$5,400.00 remaining in the fund. As of July 1, 2009, another \$10,000 will be transferred into the fund by the City.

There had been some interest by sign companies in marketing the program to local businesses directly to businesses with non-conforming signs. It is not clear that any follow-up has occurred in this effort. Ms. DeWitt suggested that the EDA again market the program by a mailed flyer with information regarding the program.

Business Appreciation Awards

No nominations have been received to date. Ms. DeWitt submitted a flyer outlining the award and requirements to receive the award to the Directors. The Directors' will provide nominations to Ms. DeWitt by no later than April 24, 2009, and will vote at their next regular meeting. The Directors also instructed Ms. DeWitt to revise the award conditions and guidelines for consideration by the EDA. The award is scheduled to be presented at the May regular meeting of the Williamsburg City Council.

Arts and Culture Workshop

Ms. DeWitt advised the EDA Directors of a workshop offered regarding art and cultural districts in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Shelly Weisberg of the Arts Council is scheduled to attend. Ms. DeWitt also suggested that a member of the EDA should also attend, and provided information to the Directors for their further review.

Sales Tax

Sales tax figures were distributed, and Ms. DeWitt announced that Plaza Azteca has signed a lease to open in the High Street Development.

Discussion with Paul Freiling

Mr. Mason reported that he had some discussion with Councilman Paul Freiling regarding economic development in the area. Mr. Freiling suggested during that discussion that it may be helpful for EDA Directors to meet with commercial bankers in the area regarding their ideas to emphasize the positive aspects of locating in and conducting business in Williamsburg. Mr. Freiling suggested this as a way of helping the EDA think creatively about what the EDA could do to help draw businesses to Williamsburg, and further, where the EDA fits into marketing Williamsburg as a good location for business.

Williamsburg Symphonia

Ms. DeWitt told the EDA that the Williamsburg Symphonia requested a donation from the EDA for their June 6 event at Lake Matoaka. The Directors determined that they would prefer to assist the Symphonia with the logistics of putting together packages with local businesses for out-of-town visitors to attend the event, and with targeting areas outside Williamsburg to market the event. The Directors offered their logistical assistance for this year's event but declined to make a monetary donation.

Next Meeting

Mr. Mason announced the next meeting of the Authority will be at 3:00 p.m. on May 12, 2009. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Secretary Pro Tem

Chairman